GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:142
ANSWERED ON:26.11.2007
WAGES TO AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS
Dhumal Prof. Prem Kumar;Reddy Shri Karunakara G.

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has conducted any study to assess the extent of poverty and hunger being suffered by millions of agricultural labourers due to low wages in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;

(c) the wages paid to the agricultural labourers at present in the country, State-wise;

(d) whether the prevalent practice of low wages in this sector is affecting agricultural production; and

(e) if so, the remedial measures taken in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES)

(a) to (e): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement referred to in reply to part (a) to (e) of Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 142 by Shri. G. Karunakara Reddy and Prof. Prem Kumar Dhumal regarding Wages to Agricultural Labourers.

(a) & (b) According to the information received from the Planning Commission, no separate survey has been conducted for agricultural labourers. The majority of rural population comprises persons engaged in agriculture. The percentage of rural population below poverty line in the country, on the basis of the 61st Round of the National Sample Survey Organization conducted in 2004-05, has been estimated to be 21.8%. State-wise details are at Annexure -1.

(c) A statement giving Average Daily Wage paid to Agricultural (Unskilled) Labourers State-wise during 2005-06 and 2006-07 is at Annexure - II.

(d) & (e): Agricultural production depends upon many factors, other than wages, i.e., supply of inputs such as fertilizer, seeds and pesticides/insecticides, mechanization, credit flow, irrigation, rainfall and weather situation etc. There is little scope for increasing area under cultivation. The higher aggregate output levels in agriculture production would be possible through achievement of higher crop yields per hectare. So the thrust of the Government for increasing agriculture production is through more efficient use of inputs by way of implementation of various crop production programmes. These are being undertaken by the Central and State Governments.